A golf bag having a shoulder strap with a pocket for housing an electronic device such as an MP3 player, a radio, CD player, cassette player, and like devices. The shoulder strap includes a speaker, controls, and wiring to connect the electronic device to the speaker.
GOLF BAG HAVING SHOULDER STRAP WITH AN ELECTRONIC DEVICE

[0001] This invention relates generally to golf equipment and, in particular, to a golf bag having a shoulder strap with an electronic device.

BACKGROUND

[0002] Typically, golfers carry their golf bags utilizing one or more shoulder straps. Golf bag shoulder straps come in a variety of shapes, sizes, and colors. Furthermore, many golfers enjoy listening to music and/or videos while playing or practicing golf. Often, golfers will listen to music and/or watch videos utilizing an MP3 player.

[0003] MP3 players have been in existence for several years and golfers usually carry their MP3 players on their person while playing golf or practicing. Sometimes, the MP3 player can inhibit the golfer's ability to socialize with others because individual golfers utilize ear phones to listen to audio portions of the file. Moreover, the wiring utilized to connect the MP3 player to the ear phones can interfere with the golfer's swing as he/she plays or practices. Therefore, there is a need in the art for apparatus to allow golfers to listen to and/or watch files on an MP3 player while playing golf or practicing such that golfers are capable of interacting with other players and not substantially interfering with an individual golfer's swings.

DRAWINGS

[0004] FIG. 1 is a top view of a golf bag shoulder strap including a pocket to house an electronic device in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention; [0005] FIG. 2 is a top view of a golf bag shoulder strap including an electronic device in accordance with another embodiment of the present invention; [0006] FIG. 3 is a top view of a golf bag shoulder strap including an electrical connector for connection to an electronic device in accordance with a further embodiment of the present invention; and [0007] FIG. 4 is a perspective view of a golf bag including the shoulder strap of FIG. 1.

DESCRIPTION

[0008] FIG. 1 shows a shoulder strap 100 in accordance with one embodiment of the present invention. Shoulder strap 100 includes an elongated body 170 with an upper end 172 and a lower end 176. Shoulder strap 100 may be coupled to a golf bag such as golf bag 400 described below. Moreover, shoulder strap 100 includes a pad 180 attached to elongated body 170 intermediate upper end 172 and lower end 176. [0009] Shoulder strap 100 includes a pocket 110 to receive and hold an electronic device 140. In one embodiment, pocket 110 has a size so that it may receive and hold an audio device such as an MPEG-1 Audio Layer-3 (MP3) player. In another embodiment, pocket 110 is sized so that it is capable of receiving and holding an iPod® manufactured by Apple Computer, Inc. of Cupertino, Calif. In further embodiments, pocket 110 may receive and hold any type of MP3 player, radio, compact disk (CD) player, cassette player, and other electronic audio and/or audio video devices such as internet access devices, PDAs, cell phones and multi-media devices.

[0010] Shoulder strap 100 also includes one or more speakers 120 mounted on the elongated body 170 and oriented between upper end 172 and lower end 176. Speaker 120 may be any device suitably configured to receive an electronic signal and output sound waves. As such, speaker 120 may be any speaker known in the art or developed in the future. In one embodiment, speaker 120 is oriented on shoulder strap 100 such that when an individual is carrying a golf bag utilizing golf bag shoulder strap 100, speaker 120 is oriented approximately one of the individual's ears.

[0011] Additionally, speaker 120 includes circuitry such that speaker 120 may produce low volumes. In addition or alternatively, speaker 120 may include circuitry to produce medium and high volumes as well. Speaker 120 is configured to produce audio signals that are audible inside a pre-determined geographic distance such that persons outside the pre-determined distance are not substantially disturbed by the audio signals produced by speaker 120. In one embodiment, the geographic distance is less than about ten feet. In another embodiment, the geographic distance is less than about two feet. Notably, the invention contemplates that the geographic distance may be any pre-determined distance.

[0012] In another embodiment, shoulder strap 100 includes a set of controls 130 to control an electronic device housed in pocket 110. Controls 130 are oriented on golf bag shoulder strap 100 intermediate upper end 172 and lower end 176 of elongated body 101. Moreover, controls 130 include one or more volume switches, play/pause switches, one or more scroll switches, one or more on/off switches, and/or any other control switches suitable for controlling the electronic device housed within pocket 110.

[0013] Shoulder strap 100 also includes wiring 160 extending between the speaker 120 and the pocket 110 to connect speaker 120 and controls 130 to the electronic device 140 housed within pocket 110. The wiring 160 includes an electrical connector (not shown) within pocket 110 so that the electronic device 140 housed within pocket 110 may be suitably connected to speaker 120 and controls 130.

[0014] In operation, an individual places the electronic device 140 in pocket 110, and connects the wiring 160 (via the electrical connector) to the electronic device 140. The electronic device 140 may then be controlled by controls 130 and/or controls included on the electronic device 140 itself.

[0015] FIG. 2 shows a shoulder strap 200 including an electronic device 250 in accordance with another embodiment of the present invention. Electronic device 250 is permanently affixed to golf bag shoulder strap 200. As discussed above, electronic device 250 may be an MP3 player (e.g., an iPod®), a radio, a CD player, a cassette player, and the like electronic devices.

[0016] Shoulder strap 200 includes an elongated body 270 having an upper end 272 and a lower end 276, a pad 280, a speaker 220, and controls 230 similar to the elongated body 170 with upper end 172 and lower end 176, pad 180, speaker 120, and controls 130, respectively, of shoulder strap 100. Furthermore, shoulder strap 200 includes wiring 260 (not shown) to connect electronic device 250 to speaker 220 and controls 230. In operation, the electronic device 250 may be controlled by controls 230 and/or controls included on the electronic device 250 itself.

[0017] FIG. 3 shows a shoulder strap 300 including circuitry to accommodate connection to an electronic device in accordance with a further embodiment of the present invention. Similar to the shoulder straps 100 and 200 illustrated in
FIGS. 1 and 2, shoulder strap 300 includes an elongated body 370 with an upper end 372 and a lower end 376, a pad 380, a speaker 320, and controls 330 similar to elongated bodies 170 and 270 with upper ends 172 and 272 and lower ends 176 and 276, pads 180 and 280, speakers 120 and 220, and controls 130 and 230, respectively, of shoulder straps 100 and 200. In addition, shoulder strap 300 includes an electrical connector 350 and wiring 360 to connect speaker 320 and/or controls 330 to an electronic device such as an MP3 player, wherein the MP3 player may be carried on the golfer or on/in a golf bag connected to shoulder strap 300. In operation, the golfer connects the MP3 player to the electrical connector 350, and may control the MP3 player by controls 330 and/or controls included on the MP3 player itself.

[0018] FIG. 4 illustrates a golf bag 400 including a shoulder strap 500 which is similar to shoulder strap 100. Specifically, shoulder strap 500 includes a pocket at 510, wiring (not shown), an elongated body 570 an upper end 572 and a lower end 576, a pad 580, a speaker 520, and controls 530 similar to pocket 110, wiring 120, elongated body 170 with upper end 172 and lower end 176, pad 180, speaker 120, and controls 130, respectively, of shoulder strap 100. In addition, golf bag strap 500 includes a connector (not shown) within pocket 510 to connect speaker 520 and/or controls 530 to an electronic device (e.g., an MP3 player) housed within pocket 510. Elongated body 570 has its upper end 572 and its lower end 576 connected to body 410 at a location 574 and a location 578, respectively. The pad 580 is located between upper end 572 and lower end 576 of elongated body 570.

[0019] Golf bag 400 includes a generally tubular body 410 with an open top end 420, a closed bottom end 430, and a spinal axis 440 extending longitudinally between top end 420 and bottom end 430. Top end 420 is defined by a throat structure 450 similar to that disclosed in U.S. Pat. No. 4,596,328 issued to John A. Solheim.

[0020] Golf bag 400 also includes another shoulder strap 470, wherein shoulder strap 470 includes an upper end 472 connected to body 410 at a location 474 proximate top end 420 and a lower end 476 connected to body 410 at a location 478 which is generally intermediate top end 420 and bottom end 430. Shoulder strap 470 may also include an elongated pad 480 intermediate upper end 472 and lower end 476.

[0021] Shoulder strap 470 has an adjustment device 484 disposed on lower end 476 for adjusting the overall length of strap 470, which length is measured between locations 474 and location 478. Similarly, shoulder strap 500 has an adjustment device 584 disposed on lower end 576 for adjusting the overall length of strap 500, which length is measured between locations 574 and location 578. By utilizing adjustment devices 484 and 584, shoulder straps 470 and 500 may have their overall lengths adjusted independently, as desired.

[0022] Although FIG. 4 depicts a particular golf bag, shoulder straps 100, 200 and 300 may be used with other suitable golf bags or other types of bags (i.e. computer bags, backpacks, etc.). Further, while the golf bag 400 in FIG. 4 has two shoulder straps 470 and 500, alternatively it could have only shoulder strap 500.

What is claimed is:

1. A golf bag comprising:
   a generally tubular body having an open top end and a closed bottom end;
   a shoulder strap having an upper end coupled to the tubular body proximate the open top end and a lower end coupled to the tubular body intermediate the open top end and the closed bottom end; and
   the shoulder strap including an elongated body, a pocket on the elongated body for housing an electronic device, a speaker on the elongated body, and wiring extending between the speaker and the pocket, the wiring being adapted for connection to the electronic device.

2. The golf bag of claim 1, further comprising a set of controls connected to the wiring for controlling the electronic device.

3. The golf bag of claim 1, wherein the electronic device is an audio device.

4. The golf bag of claim 3, wherein the audio device is an MP3 player.

5. The golf bag of claim 1, wherein the speaker is oriented on the elongated body so that the speaker is proximate an ear of a user when the shoulder strap is worn on a shoulder of the user.

6. The golf bag of claim 1, wherein the shoulder strap includes a pad attached to the elongated body between the upper and lower ends thereof.

7. The golf bag of claim 1, wherein the shoulder strap has an overall length and further comprising an adjustment device on the shoulder strap for adjusting the overall length.

8. A golf bag comprising:
   a generally tubular body having an open top end and a closed bottom end;
   a shoulder strap having an upper end coupled to the tubular body proximate the open top end and a lower end coupled to the tubular body intermediate the open top end and the closed bottom end; and
   the shoulder strap including an elongated body, an electronic device affixed to the elongated body, a speaker on the elongated body, and wiring extending between the speaker and the electronic device.

9. The golf bag of claim 8, further comprising a set of controls connected to the wiring so that the electronic device may be controlled by the set of controls.

10. The golf bag of claim 8, wherein the electronic device is an audio device.

11. The golf bag of claim 10, wherein the audio device is an MP3 player.

12. The golf bag of claim 8, wherein the speaker is oriented on the elongated body so that the speaker is proximate an ear of a user when the shoulder strap is worn on a shoulder of the user.

13. The golf bag of claim 8, wherein the shoulder strap includes a pad attached to the elongated body between the upper and lower ends thereof.

14. The golf bag of claim 8, wherein the shoulder strap has an overall length and further comprising an adjustment device on the shoulder strap for adjusting the overall length.

15. A golf bag comprising:
   a generally tubular body having an open top end and a closed bottom end;
   a shoulder strap having an upper end coupled to the tubular body proximate the open top end and a lower end coupled to the tubular body intermediate the open top end and the closed bottom end; and
   the shoulder strap including an elongated body, an electrical connector on the elongated body for connection to an electronic device, a speaker on the elongated body, and wiring extending between the speaker and the electrical connector.
16. The golf bag of claim 15, further comprising a set of controls connected to the wiring so that the electronic device may be controlled by the set of controls.

17. The golf bag of claim 15, wherein the electronic device is an audio device.

18. The golf bag of claim 17, wherein the audio device is an MP3 player.

19. The golf bag of claim 15, wherein the speaker is oriented on the elongated body so that the speaker is proximate an ear of a user when the shoulder strap is worn on a shoulder of the user.

20. The golf bag of claim 15, wherein the shoulder strap includes a pad attached to the elongated body between the upper and lower ends thereof.

21. The golf bag of claim 15, wherein the shoulder strap has an overall length and further comprising an adjustment device on the shoulder strap for adjusting the overall length.

22. A shoulder strap comprising:
   an elongated body, a pocket on the elongated body for housing an electronic device, a speaker on the elongated body, and wiring extending between the speaker and the pocket, the wiring being adapted for connection to the electronic device.

23. The shoulder strap of claim 22, further comprising a set of controls connected to the wiring for controlling the electronic device.

24. A shoulder strap comprising:
   an elongated body, an electronic device affixed to the elongated body, a speaker on the elongated body, and wiring extending between the speaker and the electronic device.

25. The shoulder strap of claim 24, further comprising a set of controls connected to the wiring for controlling the electronic device.

26. A shoulder strap comprising:
   an elongated body, an electrical connector on the elongated body for connection to an electronic device, a speaker on the elongated body, and wiring extending between the speaker and the electrical connector.

27. The shoulder strap of claim 26, further comprising a set of controls connected to the wiring so that the electronic device may be controlled by the set of controls.

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